



Burdett Solar GP Corp.

Burdett Solar Project Amendment and Time Extension

October 1, 2019

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 24636-D01-2019

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Proceeding 24636

Application 24636-A001

October 1, 2019

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The Commission may, within 30 days of the date of this decision and without notice, correct typographical, spelling and calculation errors and other similar types of errors and post the corrected decision on its website.

1 Decision summary

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission considers whether to approve an application from Burdett Solar GP Corp., to amend its approval to construct a 20-megawatt solar power plant, designated as the Burdett Solar Project, to extend the expiry date for construction, and to connect the power plant to FortisAlberta Inc.'s 25-kilovolt distribution system. After consideration of the record of the proceeding, and for the reasons outlined in this decision, the Commission finds that approval of the power plant amendment, time extension and connection order are in the public interest having regard to the social, economic, and other effects of the project, including their effect on the environment.

2 Introduction and background

2. Burdett Solar GP Corp., pursuant to Approval 23364-D02-2018,¹ has approval to construct and operate Burdett Solar Project (the project), near the hamlet of Burdett. The completion date for the project was stipulated as July 31, 2020.

3. Burdett Solar, by Application 24636-A001, registered on June 11, 2019, applied to the Commission requesting approval of a time extension from July 31, 2020, to December 31, 2021, to complete the project. It also applied to alter the generation equipment for the approved, but not yet constructed project, and for a connection order to connect the project to FortisAlberta Inc.'s 25-kilovolt distribution system.

3 Discussion

4. Burdett Solar stated that a time extension of the construction completion date was required because of the proposed generation equipment changes, which would result in more efficient solar panels and inverter-transformer equipment, and in an improved equipment layout.

5. Burdett Solar proposed to alter the project by changing the model of the solar panels, increasing the total number of solar panels from approximately 70,000 to approximately 75,000, changing the inverter model and optimizing the panel layout. Burdett Solar confirmed that the project location and footprint would remain unchanged. However, in response to an information request, Burdett Solar confirmed that final selection of the make and model of the equipment will occur at the end of the first quarter of 2020.

6. Burdett Solar confirmed that no additional environmental or noise impacts would occur from the proposed changes to technology. Furthermore, Burdett Solar committed to not exceed

¹ Power Plant Approval 23364-D02-2018, Proceeding 23364, Application 23364-A001, October 3, 2018.

the environmental and noise impacts of the project as currently anticipated and submitted in this application.

7. Burdett Solar stated that no new wildlife features were identified in 2019 that require additional mitigation measures, and it submitted confirmation from Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) that no further action is required from Burdett Solar, and that it has satisfied AEP's requirement of keeping surveys current.

8. Burdett Solar confirmed that FortisAlberta is prepared to allow the project to connect to its 25-kilovolt distribution system and it also provided an updated letter of non-objection from FortisAlberta as part of its application.

9. Burdett Solar confirmed that there are several new stakeholders within the project area and that they were included in a project-update mail-out in August 2019. In addition, Burdett Solar consulted in person with stakeholders within 800 metres of the project; no concerns were raised.

10. Burdett Solar provided an updated solar glare hazard analysis report, which indicated that the intersections along the high-traffic-volume routes, including Highway 3, the rail line to the north of Highway 3 and the Bow Island Airport, are not expected to experience solar glare. Burdett Solar provided a copy of the revised solar glare hazard analysis report in the project update mail-out and discussed its contents with the County of Forty Mile, Bow Island Airport and Alberta Transportation; no concerns were raised.

11. Burdett Solar submitted an updated noise impact assessment along with a table that compared the predicted sound levels to the permissible sounds levels. The results indicated that the project would be in compliance with Rule 012: *Noise Control*.

4 Findings

12. Burdett Solar has provided information on the need, nature and duration of the requested amendments, including the time extension to construct the power plant. Based upon this information, the Commission finds that Burdett Solar has demonstrated that the requested time extension and design changes are of a minor nature.

13. Due to the minor nature of the application, and confirmation from Burdett Solar that there are no concerns from potentially affected stakeholders within 2,000 metres of the project site, the Commission considers that its decision would not directly and adversely affect the rights of a person, and therefore, did not issue a notice nor require a hearing, pursuant to Section 9 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

14. The Commission is satisfied that the technical, siting, emissions, environmental and noise aspects of the project meet Rule 007: *Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations and Hydro Developments*, and Rule 012: *Noise Control*, requirements. The Commission is satisfied that additional consultation with stakeholders by Burdett Solar on the proposed power plant changes, interconnection to the distribution system and time extension meet Rule 007 participant involvement program guidelines.

15. Burdett Solar's final selection of the make and model of the equipment is expected to occur at the end of the first quarter of 2020. Because the final project equipment has not been selected, the Commission will require additional information specifying the detailed design of the project, once that is finalized. Further, the Commission will require confirmation that any changes to the chosen equipment design will not alter the project's compliance with any applicable Rule 007 or Rule 012 requirements.

16. The Commission considers that the solar glare hazard analysis report is reasonable and is satisfied that no hazardous solar glare is expected to occur. It acknowledges, however, that there are currently no standards or regulations in place related to public safety associated with solar glare. To ensure that any glare associated with the project is addressed by Burdett Solar in a timely manner, the project's approval will be conditional on Burdett Solar filing a report detailing any complaints or concerns it receives, or is made aware of, regarding solar glare from the project during its first year of operation, as well as Burdett Solar's response. Burdett Solar shall file this report no later than 13 months after the project becomes operational.

17. Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants* came into force on July 1, 2019, and applies to all solar projects approved after September 1, 2019, including time extensions and amendments. Accordingly, Burdett Solar must comply with the requirements of Rule 033. Section 3(3) of Rule 033 requires approval holders to submit annual post-construction monitoring survey reports to AEP and the Commission. Burdett Solar shall submit an annual post-construction monitoring survey report to AEP and the Commission within 13 months of the project becoming operational, and on or before the same date every subsequent year for which AEP requires surveys, pursuant to Section 3(3) of Rule 033.

18. The Commission considers the project to be in the public interest in accordance with Section 17 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

19. Having regard for the foregoing, the Commission approves the application to construct and operate the project subject to the following conditions:

- a. Once Burdett Solar has made its final selection of equipment for the project, it must file a letter with the Commission in which it identifies the make, model, and quantity of the equipment, and include an updated site plan if the equipment layout has changed. This letter must also confirm that the finalized design of the project will not increase the land, noise, or environmental impacts beyond those reflected in the materials submitted by Burdett Solar in its application and approved by the Commission. The letter is to be filed no later than 90 days before construction is scheduled to begin.
- b. Burdett Solar shall file a report with the Commission detailing any complaints or concerns about solar glare that are brought to its attention during its first year of operation, as well as Burdett Solar's response. Burdett Solar shall file this report no later than 13 months after the project becomes operational.
- c. Burdett Solar shall submit an annual post-construction monitoring survey report to AEP and the Commission within 13 months of the project becoming operational, and on or before the same date, every subsequent year for which AEP requires surveys pursuant to Section 3(3) of Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants*.

5 Decision

20. Pursuant to sections 11, 18 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the Commission approves the application and grants Burdett Solar GP Corp. the following approval and order:

- Appendix 1 – Power Plant Approval 24636-D02-2019 – October 1, 2019.
- Appendix 2 – Connection Order 24636-D03-2019 – October 1, 2019.

21. The appendixes will be distributed separately.

Dated on October 1, 2019.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Tracee Collins
Commission Member

Appendix A – Summary of Commission directions and conditions requiring further submissions

This section is intended to provide a summary of those directions and conditions that require follow-up with the Commission, for the convenience of readers. It is not intended to summarize all of the conditions imposed on the applicant. In the event of any difference between the directions and conditions in this section and those in the main body of the decision, the wording in the main body of the decision shall prevail. These directions and conditions will be tracked as conditions of Power Plant Approval 24636-D02-2019, using the AUC's eFiling System.

- Once Burdett Solar has made its final selection of equipment for the project, it must file a letter with the Commission in which it identifies the make, model, and quantity of the equipment, and include an updated site plan if the equipment layout has changed. This letter must also confirm that the finalized design of the project will not increase the land, noise, or environmental impacts beyond those reflected in the materials submitted by Burdett Solar in its application and approved by the Commission. The letter is to be filed no later than 90 days before construction is scheduled to begin.
- Burdett Solar shall file a report with the Commission detailing any complaints or concerns about solar glare that are brought to its attention during its first year of operation, as well as Burdett Solar's response. Burdett Solar shall file this report no later than 13 months after the project becomes operational.
- Burdett Solar shall submit an annual post-construction monitoring survey report to AEP and the Commission within 13 months of the project becoming operational, and on or before the same date, every subsequent year for which AEP requires surveys pursuant to Section 3(3) of Rule 033: *Post-approval Monitoring Requirements for Wind and Solar Power Plants*.